Who would have ever thought I would be wondering what to write for my monthly Bulletin article during a Pandemic? And, that using the word Pandemic is not an exaggeration.

During the week of March 19, Rav Jeremy quickly decided to share Friday night services via ZOOM (if you are not familiar with ZOOM you will find helpful information on page 5). My emotional reaction as I saw 16 households participate surprised me. For lack of a better word, it felt good! The circumstances are unprecedented and not “good” but seeing the faces of Rav Jeremy and Merle, some regular service attendees, those observing Yahrzeit’s, some who cannot participate in services regularly due to health reasons (but can remotely!) and some ‘strangers’ was quite moving. Community was created in that virtual space. Our community is to be treasured.

Similarly, we held our first Board of Directors meeting this week via ZOOM. Again, I was moved by seeing every Board member participate. I was pleased that we were able to complete some business; it is clearly not business as usual but we brain stormed about the Temple’s response to COVID-19 and discussed other new business. But, in truth, what felt really nice was being able to see the other Board members and recognize that connection.

Do not get me wrong, I do not think any of us can anticipate or predict the ramifications of COVID-19. In fact, by the time you read this, everything may have changed again.

This is a first for all of us and we are all trying to do the best we can in uncertain times. I worry about people’s health and the health care system as a whole. I worry about loneliness and economic strain and everything that brings into our lives. However, to get a little flicker of happiness and hope with something as basic as a ZOOM meeting or service is well worth it!

On Sunday, March 15th, the NY Times had an opinion piece “This is How You Live When the World Falls Apart”. I recommend it. [https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/12/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-disaster-response.html?searchResultPosition=1](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/12/opinion/sunday/coronavirus-disaster-response.html?searchResultPosition=1) The author speaks about the basic human nature of helping others. After the Great Alaskan 9.2 Earthquake in 1964, the Disaster Research Institute at Ohio State University which sent sociologists to disaster sites to “dispassionately document that disarray” did not find the looting, violence and antisocial behavior they expected. The author of the opinion piece argues that disasters awaken the capacity to care for one another in ways that might not occur during everyday living. And this is seen repeatedly with cooperation, levelheadedness and kindness during disasters of different types.

Admittedly, an unseen virus is different than sharing an earthquake together. But since we are all vulnerable to this virus and the risk is shared then the expectation is that people will continue to care for each other. Washing hands, distancing ourselves from each other,

Continued on page 3
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383 Jackson Street
P.O. Box 61
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Phone: 860.423.3743
Fax: 860.423.7594

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**The Temple is closed to the public at this time.**

To leave a confidential voice message for Rabbi Jeremy Schwartz call:
860.423.3743 Ext. 1

Email the Rabbi:
ravjeremy@templebnaiisrael.org

**Office Administrator**
Marlene B. Aulten
office@templebnaiisrael.org

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listening to recommendations are all ways of helping one another.

Sure we are doing these things for ourselves but it is also for the greater good of society. We worry together and are brought together in a “powerful psychological sense”. This is not going to be easy. Some of us will get sick; some will lose livelihoods and there will be suffering. However, the comfort of our community remains and I thank you all for that certainty.

Shalom

Anne

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**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER**

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**PASSEOVER OVERVIEW**

*(THIS OVERVIEW IS REPEATED FROM A PRIOR EDITION OF THE BULLETIN)*

Passover begins this year on the evening of April 8th and lasts seven or eight days. On Passover, we rid our houses and our selves of oppressive puffiness, celebrate our deliverance from the slavery of Egypt, and remind ourselves that God intends for us and for all human beings to simply be free.

Hamets: Hamets is the puffy stuff that Jews traditionally do not eat (or even own) on Passover. Technically hamets is any food which contains one of five grains -- wheat, barley, spelt, rye and oats -- if special precautions of keeping it dry and of very quick baking haven't been taken in order to prevent leavening. Yeast is also hamets. In the same way that pork is the non-kosher meat par excellence, bread is the quintessential hamets. Some additional foods are considered to be hamets by some Jews. In the Middle Ages, a few European communities began to consider legumes and rice ("kitni'ot") to be hamets, even though the Talmud explicitly rejects this categorization. In the last few hundred years, this became the standard custom among Ashkenazic Jews, though many liberal Ashkenazim will eat legumes.

Seder: As you probably know, the central ritual of Passover is the Seder, a pedagogical, intellectual, spiritual, informal, formal banquet/service on the first (or first and second) night of the festival. The word "seder" literally means "order" and to conduct a seder, you'll need a haggadah -- the booklet that gives you the order of the evening. There are lots of haggadot available, with lots of different approaches to the seder, and even if you're not in the market this year for a new one, you might enjoy a trip to a Jewish book store to see what's out there.

Kashering: If you want to observe the tradition of having chamets-free, kosher-for-passover dishes (pots and pans, etc), but don't have a whole separate Passover set, there are a few simple rules of "kashering" -- making dishes halachically kosher for Passover. **First**, ceramics (except fine china) and anything that is made of more than one piece in such a way that it has inaccessible crevices cannot be kashered. Also, anything used to bake bread cannot be kashered. **Second**, anything that can be kashered and only comes into contact with cold food need only be cleaned thoroughly. Things that come into contact with hot food are kashered in the way that they are used, in the following sense: things that are normally subjected to dry heat are kashered by dry heat. This includes the oven and things normally used in the oven. Pots that are used for cooking on the stovetop are kashered by being immersed in boiling water or by boiling water in them and causing it to overflow.

Silverware is also kashered by being immersed in boiling water. There are variant traditions regarding glassware. Some say it should be soaked in water for 72 hours, with a change in water each day; some say it only needs to be thoroughly cleaned.

Continued on page 5
I know many of us aren’t big fans of the “Four Sons/Children” section of the Passover Haggadah. Although on the positive side, it’s an early acknowledgement of the need for differentiated education, and has been a stimulant to a lot of interesting “art midrash,” it also strikes many as pigeonholing and not very compassionate. We don’t like calling any children “wicked” or “rebellious.” (Although, in my family Seder, people so value rebellion that there’s often a conflict over who gets to “be”/read that child.)

Nonetheless, there is a useful teaching in the answer to the “wicked” child: “And since they removed themselves from the collective, they’ve denied the essential principle. So you should ‘blunt their teeth’ and tell them: ‘This is because of what the Eternal did for me when I left Egypt.’ (Ex. 13:8) ‘For me’ and not ‘for them.’ For had they been there, they wouldn’t have been redeemed.”

How has this child “denied the essential principle?” Usually, in these classical texts, denying the essential principle means denying God’s existence. (See a separate article on page 13, about how there are plenty of “good Jews” who deny or doubt God’s existence, but don’t remove themselves from the community.) Here, the child, by making a sharp distinction between “you” – the Passover-celebrating parents/family/group – and “me,” the child is accused of blasphemy. Why? Maybe we could say that they don’t consider the story of liberation from slavery to be their story and God is essentially That Which Liberates From Slavery. Or maybe we could say that they think “you” and “me” are essentially separate and the religious impulse is that there is a ONE that unites us. When ‘what concerns you’ is of no concern to me, I’ve denied an essential Jewish principle that was expressed by Martin Buber as the obligation (mitzvah) that falls

Continued on page 8

## READINGS FOR APRIL 2020

**SATURDAY APRIL 4TH, 2020**
**10 NISAN 5780**
Parashat Tzav
Shabbat HaGadol
Leviticus 6:1 - 8:36
This Year: 6:1 - 7:10
Haftarah: Malachi 3:4-24

**SATURDAY APRIL 18TH 2020**
**24 NISAN 5780**
Omer: 9
Parashat Shemini
Shabbat Mahar Hodesh
Leviticus 9:1 - 11:47
This Year: 9:1 - 10:11
Haftarah: II Samuel 6:1 - 7:17

**SATURDAY APRIL 11TH 2020**
**17 NISAN 5780**
Omer: 2
Shabbat Hol Hamoed
Pesah
Exodus 33:12 - 34:26, Numbers 28:19-25
Haftarah: Ezekiel 37:1-14

**SATURDAY APRIL 25TH 2020**
**1 IYAR 5780**
Omer: 16
Parashat Tazria-Metzora
Shabbat Rosh Hodesh
Leviticus 12:1 - 15:33
This Year: Leviticus 12:1 - 13:28, Numbers 28:9-15
Haftarah: Isaiah 66:1-24
Dear Friends,

As we’ve seen, the progress of the Coronavirus spread and the steps necessary to combat it are quite hard to predict, and our community’s efforts to support one another physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually are also very much in-process.

I’m so grateful to the members of our Caring Committee who have begun a phone tree checking in on the other members of our community. Thank you!

As to our Shabbat and holiday programming, as I write in late March, I anticipate a virtual meeting of the Ritual Committee and some others at the beginning of the month that will set more definite parameters for our virtual Shabbat and Holiday gatherings.

In the meantime, I expect that we will offer some form of virtual Shabbat gathering for our community each week. Please watch for emails with links. **I think I can be confident that we won’t meet in person until, at the earliest, April 17th.**

We will let all of our friends and members for whom we have e-mail addresses know when virtual gatherings are scheduled and when in-person gatherings are cancelled.

If you don’t have internet access, or you know of a member who does not have internet access, please call the office in mid-April and we’ll get back to you about the status of our in-person schedule.

-Rav Jeremy

**P.S. For virtual gatherings, we’ll be using a program called Zoom a lot. It’s easy to use, but here are two useful beginner guides:**


---

**For further details:** For more information about halachic aspects of Passover or anything else, consult with the rabbi or with the excellent guide to Conservative Halachah, *A Guide to Jewish Religious Practice* by the late Rabbi Isaac Klein. An excellent overview of the whole holiday cycle is *The Jewish Holidays: a Guide and Commentary* by Rabbi Michael Strassfeld. Most haggadot will contain, in addition to the seder, information about preparing for Passover.
Refuah Shleyma - Get Well  רפואה שלימה
We offer get well wishes to Jonathan Morascini, son of Jeanne and Tony Morascini and wish him a speedy recovery.

SOME VERY ARTISTIC CHALLAH CREATED BY ONE OF OUR TEMPLE FAMILY MEMBERS! THANK YOU BERNICE FREEDMAN-WARNKE

To your left, Bernice’s beautiful Menorah-themed challah that she created for our December Hanukkah party. Below is a gorgeous (and no doubt very tasty as I am sure they both were) mandala challah!

The inspiration for the mandala challah was Rav Jeremy. We were discussing how I shaped the menorah challah for the Hanukkah party and Rav Jeremy mentioned mandalas; it all came together instantly in my mind and I took the challenge.
Bernice
CARING COMMITTEE
Caring for each other in times of need.

Fran Jaffe
860.228.2390
franjaffe@earthlink.net

Ellie Shane
860.428.5392
eshane01@charter.net

I’d like to begin by thanking Hillary and Karen for their leadership in March and to give a shout out to Sheila who has been coordinating efforts on our behalf to arrange some meals for Sharon and Bruce Brettschneider. I know they are greatly appreciated. Next month’s leaders are Hillary and Doreen. May’s leaders will be Margie and Bernice.

As always, our committee welcomes new members. Why not consider joining us in lending a hand to our fellow congregants when they’re in need? It’s a simple commitment and extremely worthwhile and rewarding. Call our monthly leaders, the committee co-chairs, Fran Jaffe and Ellie Shane, or Rav Jeremy if you or anyone you know needs some assistance.

With the ever growing concerns about corona virus, I can only hope that our Bnai Israel family remains healthy during the coming weeks. While I’m grateful for everyone’s willingness to help, I want to make sure we all stay safe in our caring endeavors. I know you’ll all use common sense when reaching out, but if at any time you don’t feel comfortable doing so in person, a phone call or card is always appreciated. Please check in on your friends and neighbors to be sure all is okay with them.

Continue to think spring. It is coming – promise!
Fran

PLEASE CHECK WITH
CAROL KRAUS - yvescarol.kraus@gmail.com
FOR INFORMATION REGARDING WHETHER OR NOT THE BOOK CLUB WILL BE MEETING IN APRIL. THANK YOU.

A helpful reminder from your office administrator:
Times and/or details of events may change after we go to print; always check our on-line calendar to confirm event information.

www.templebnaiisrael.org/temple-bnai-israel-calendar/
TIKKUN OLAM COMMITTEE  
Merle Potchinsky, Chair, jermerle@att.net

Yes, COVID-19 is the word on the street and having an impact on Tikkun Olam activity among everything else. Unfortunately, our March 20th and 22nd HIAS Refugee Shabbat events had to be cancelled. We expect that we will be rescheduling.

We are still anticipating hosting a synagogue community-wide speed-dating event on April 26th, where we will take the opportunity to get to know each other and understand our collective cares, wonders, and strengths. This will introduce the community to the idea and practice of “community organizing”, a method of learning each other’s stories and concerns, developing leadership, and working with other congregations to develop the ability (the “power”) to make positive changes in our community. The Tikkun Olam Committee is excited to continue to educated ourselves with the whole community as we structure our tikkun olam process forward. Please plan to attend this event at the synagogue from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

We are anticipating having childcare available for our younger children (~4-11) and would be excited to involve our teens and all adults. It promises to be fun, illuminating and novel!

Stand by for opportunities to work in the WAIM garden this summer. Speaking of WAIM, we collected $60 for them at our Purim celebration this year. Thank you to all who were able to contribute. I can assure you the money will be used wisely!

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about any of the work your Tikkun Olam Committee is doing. jermerle@att.net.

RABBINIC REFLECTIONS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

on me in my meeting with any individual “Thou” or with “the Eternal Thou.”

There are several other similar teachings in the tradition: “A person should not see the public in trouble and go home and eat and drink and say, ‘peace upon you, O my self!’” (Tanna D’Vei Eliyahu Zuta 1:3) “Hillel says, Do not separate from the community.” (Pirkei Avot 2:4)

Ironically, in the coronavirus situation, it turns out that the best way to not morally separate yourself from the community is to physically separate yourself from the community! I’m grateful to Temple President Anne Willenborg for clarifying for me why we’re taking all these precautions concerning the virus. For most Americans – those below age 60 or 70, those without underlying respiratory or immunity challenges, the virus presents a quite low (but not zero) risk of serious health consequences or death. But if we sufficiently slow the spread of the disease, those who need hospital treatment, whether for coronavirus or for any other reason, will find the beds, doctors, and nurses they need available. All of our actions to slow the disease, if successful, will save the lives of those others, the members of our community.

We don’t say, “Why are you doing this?” The essential principle is that there is no “you” and “me” who are totally separate. “We” do this because we are community connected with one another and because the liberation story, the story of hope of a mutually connected community, is our story.

Pav Jeremy
LOOKING AHEAD TO MAY AND JUNE!

The Windham Region Interfaith Working Group has an exciting spring of shared festivals and festivity. Editor’s Note: As of the creation of this issue, we are operating under the assumption that, as COVID-19 begins to pass and restrictions on gatherings are lifted, we will be able to hold community events in May and June.

SUNDAY, MAY 3rd: IFTAR, sharing the break-the-fast for Ramadan, and learning about the Abrahamic faiths’ various traditions of fasting at the Islamic Center on the Storrs UConn Campus. We will meet before sundown at the Islamic Center, and learn how Christians, Jews, and Muslims practice fasting, and then share a meal prepared by the Islamic Center for us.

SUNDAY, JUNE 14th: Building Bridges Through Music and Storytelling – Helping Celebrate World Refugee Day; time TBA. This will be a very festive event, held at Storrs Congregational Church. There will be storytelling by refugees about their journeys, music, and food. Following the event, the BUILDING BRIDGES traveling photo exhibit, about refugees and immigrants, will come to our area, thanks to the Hochberg Holocaust and Human Rights Education Committee’s funding.

Once again we will be selling the “Peace” T-shirts to benefit the Windham Area No-Freeze Hospitality Center.

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BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND - SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR NEXT MEZUZAH MAKING CLASS!

DESIGN/DECORATE YOUR OWN GLASS MEZUZAH CASE!
SUNDAY, MAY 3rd, 2020 at 3:00 p.m. AT THE TEMPLE.

Join us for a creative and enjoyable fused glass mezuzah decorating class led by glass artist extraordinaire, and Temple member, Ellen Marshall. At the completion of the workshop, Ellen will take your Mezuzah to be fired in her kiln, and it will be available for pick-up at the Temple at a later date. We look forward to “fusing” with you!

$18.00 (bring a check made payable to Ellen Marshall) to cover the cost of materials (scrolls not included).

Light refreshments served.

CLASS SIZE IS LIMITED AND IT FILLED QUICKLY LAST TIME
PLEASE RSVP NO LATER THAN APRIL 23rd to office@templebnaiisrael.org

These beautiful mezuzahs were made at the class we held in October of 2019.

CEMETERY NEWS (REPRINTED FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES)

Dear Friends, many of you may not know (or may not remember) that the Cemetery Committee, with input from Rav Jeremy and the Ritual Committee, have established burial policies which include burial of both Jewish and non-Jewish members of our community, whether or not one is a member of Temple Bnai Israel, as well as commitment of cremains. If you’ve been thinking about planning ahead and securing a spot, or spots, in our cemetery please note that the price, per plot with perpetual care is currently $650.00/plot for members of Temple Bnai Israel, $1,350.00 for out-of-area non-members, and $2,700 for local non-members.

After a close examination of the Cemetery finances, we have concluded that we must raise our fees, for the first time in over twenty years, in order to continue providing an aesthetically pleasing, well-maintained environment in which to honor our loved ones. We anticipate the new fees will go into effect in the next 1-2 months, so purchasing now will save you money.

Ken Dardick, Chair
We thank Scott DeShong for this book review.

**The Mars Room** by Rachel Kushner

Rachel Kushner conducted excellent research to develop this moving and harrowing story of life in a women's prison, showing how the legal system in California treats those who are unfortunate enough to lack good counsel, besides having few options for a decent life on the outside. It’s not that anyone isn’t guilty; the novel is even-handed in its presentation of the good and bad in most of its characters. Kushner gives us convicts, guards, police, and friends and family who are seriously flawed people, while each is humane in his or her way. Perhaps the most engaging aspect of the main character is her desperation to learn what has happened to her young son after she was incarcerated. Another major thread is a prison GED instructor who rents a cabin in the nearby mountains; Kushner frames the wilderness scenes with excerpts from the journals of Theodore Kaczynski, otherwise known as the Unabomber. The book has received several awards and was short-listed for the 2018 Man Booker Prize.

**NEW IN THE LIBRARY** (we thank Rav Jeremy for this book review).

**Nine Gates to the Chassidic Mysteries** by Jiri Langer

This wonderful book is a great place to be introduced to the magic of the pre-war Hassidic world. Langer was a wonderful story-teller who had a foot in both the Hassidic world and the Modernist world of early 20th century Prague. He grew up in a typically assimilated Jewish family, but, as a young man, made a pilgrimage to the Hassidic shtetls of Poland and Eastern Europe and took on Hassidic practices and learning. After several years, he rejoined the “Western world,” writing articles and books giving Freudian (and possibly queer) interpretation of kabbalah and Jewish symbols. He also tutored Franz Kafka in Hebrew. But he maintained his love of the Hassidic tradition and a fairly traditional Jewish practice.

This book consists of stories about several important Hassidic rebbes, written in an engaging, gentle, smiling style. The stories share the wisdom of these rebbes as well as the magical deeds attributed to them. In Langer’s hands the magic seems magical, not necessarily true, but not gratingly unbelievable either. There are other collections of stories of Hassidic masters. On the progressive side are those collected by Martin Buber. But these have been criticized as containing too high a proportion of Buber himself, relative to authentic Hassidism. On the other side are traditional collections, such as “In Praise of the Ba’al Shem Tov.” These are so fundamentally sure of the Rebbe’s miracles as to be useless to many modern reader. (At least I couldn’t push through the whole book.) But Langer’s book is a balance. It gives an insider take on Hassidism, told by an outsider. An enlightening pleasure.
Recently I’ve heard about a couple members reevaluating their relationship with the Temple community because they were atheists or agnostics. This surprised me because I’ve always assumed that a large proportion of Temple members fall into those categories. There’s also the question of what it means to believe or not believe in God. As my former senior rabbi, Elyse Goldstein, used to say, “which God do you not believe in?”

I, for example, tend to doubt there is a self-conscious Being outside the natural world that “reaches in” to affect changes here on Earth. But I do think “God” names something and I praise and try to serve It. When I affirm that God created (better: “creates”) the universe, I mean that I’m positive I neither created the world, nor own it. It’s a gift that I share with all beings. Maybe I mean something more. When I affirm that God commands me, I mean that when I face the universe, including my people’s history and teaching, I’m called to react; I have obligations that flow from that facing, that relationship. When I affirm that God saves, I mean that our lives have meaning and hope because the possibility of love and good action are always available. Maybe you disagree with those affirmations, or feel there’s reason not to use the word “God” for the source of creation, commandment, and salvation. That’s ok. Maybe, on the other hand, you think God is a supernatural Being more in line with traditional beliefs. That’s fine with me, too.

So why are so many “non-believers” Temple members? I don’t think they’re hypocrites, or just staying out of habit. One reason they’re members is because Jewish civilization enriches their lives, even if they consider God a literary character in that civilization. Our most well-attended Shabbat celebrations each month don’t involve a worship service at all. But at T.G.I. Shabbes on the second Friday of each month, we listen to a wide variety of Jewish music – ancient to modern, conventionally religious to secular – and learn something about ourselves and our world by discussing the lyrics as text. (And we have fun doing it!) At our last T.G.I. Shabbes we discussed a song in French by Riff Cohen, an Israeli singer, the first lines of which are (in translation): “I love God who exists. / I love God who does not exist.”

The monthly Shabbat dinners also do not include a service. We eat together and I bring a little passage to learn – for the past couple years, it’s been something about food. Some members (and non-members) are taking my class about what the Jewish

Continued on page 23

You Don’t Believe in God? You’re not sure? Welcome to the Club! Rav Jeremy

RECONSTRUCIONIST ONLINE RESOURCES DURING THE PANDEMIC

Reconstructing Judaism has a lot of wonderful material at https://www.reconstructingjudaism.org/connect/pandemic-resources.

There’s a “Virtual Shabbat Box” with suggestions to care for all the senses while at home on Shabbat. There’s “Recon Connect” listing opportunities for online learning, praying, and meditating all week. And there’s a link to resources in RitualWell.org relevant to this time. All updated weekly.
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Janet Robertson
Maxine Potchinsky
Susan & Jim Schmerl
Jerome & Nina Rosen

Yizkor Remembrance Book
Harry & Honey Birkenruth
Rita Pollack
David Wollner
Doreen & Bill Simonsen
Ken Dardick & Judy Stein
Martin & Randee Berliner
Sandy Roth
Debra & Paul Sarazin
Gloria Gerald

Peter & Stephanie Malinow
Gerald Berkowitz
Rita Pollack
Anne & Michael Willenborg
Grace Adams
Stuart & Joan Sidney

Carol & Yves Kraus
Ilene Reiner
Jeanne & Anthony Morascini
Grace Adams
David Wollner
Fran Storch
Martin & Randee Berliner

Todd & Mona Friedland
Jerome & Nina Rosen
David & Debbie Stoloff
Robert & Jane Moskowitz
Peter & Stephanie Malinow
Carol Colombo
Shoshana Levinson
Leana Loomer
Fran Storch
Yizkor Memorial Booklet continued:
Jeanne & Tony Morascini
Bruce & Sharon Brettschneider
Beth & Bernie Schilberg
Lex & Ramona Nishball
Sheila Amdur
Barbara Ganik
Anne & Michael Willenborg

In Honor of the High Holidays
Beverly Sims
William Okeson
Shoshana Levinson
Anat Becker
Michael Shane
Andrea Kaye
Miriam Schreiber
Pamela Nishball
Carl & Elaine David
Jeffery & Judy Walter
Mark & Devra Kemp
Lawrence & Cathy Gramling
Murray Wachman
Michelle Rabinowitz

Discretionary Fund
Judy Stein & Ken Dardick
David & Mary Ellen Goldhamer
Jill Marocchini
Leanna Loomer
Helen & Mark Ross
Gideon Hartman & Natalie Munro
William Israel (estate of)
Marsha Hilsenrad
Jill Petrowsky & Anthony Solano in
honor of the naming of their twins,
Chaya (Zoey) and Kobi (Jacoby).
Gail & Joe Petrowsky in honor of the
naming of their twin grandchildren
Rabbi Susan Schein
Eugene & Georgia Mittelman
Meyer, Ben, & Emily Rosen and
Susan Gay in memory of Shelly Mossberg
Paul & Debra Sarazin in memory of Janet Miller
Michael Orenstein (for the High Holidays)

In memory of William Israel
David & Debbie Stoloff
Kathryn Judd
Elizabeth Schaefer Wicke
Susan & Steven Wallerstein
Kiwanis Club of Norwich
Robert & Jane Moskowitz, a leaf on the Temple’s Tree of Life
Ellie Shane
FY 2019-2020 FISCAL YEAR DONATIONS CONTINUED. THANK YOU!

General Fund
Anat & Etan Markus
Bruce & Sharon Brettschneider
Tri-County Memorials
Emmanuel & Elisabeth Buzay
Janet Robertson IMO James O. Robertson
Ilene Reiner, in memory of Walter Berman and Joe Narotsky
Carl & Elaine David in memory of Harold & Sylvia Eisler &Frank & Luise David
Lily, Sam, & Willow Golden, Gerald & Lenore Kerachsky in honor of David Golden’s unveiling
Doreen Simonsen in honor of Ze’ev Herscovici and all he does to help our Temple community.
Susan and Jim Schmerl in memory of Ralph Marshall
David & Debbie Stoloff in memory of Ralph Marshall
Robert and Jane Moskowitz, a leaf on the Temple’s Tree-of-life in memory of Ralph Marshall
Ellie Shane in memory of Ralph Marshall, Shelly Mossberg, Janet Miller
Arbors Residents Association in memory of Janet Miller
Stuart & Joan Sidney in memory of Joe Narotsky
Halderstein Owl Trust
Ada K. Albright in memory of her very special grandmother, Celia Chasen, on the 66th anniversary of Celia’s Yahrzeit.
Scott DeShong in memory of Norman Drazen
Stanley Rosenstein in memory of Ralph Marshall
Grace Adams in memory of Amy VosNunez
Ada K. Albright in memory of her mother, Miriam Chasen Kerachsky on her 38th Yahrzeit
The seven week period starting with the second day of Passover can be an excellent season for a spiritual/personal check-up. Beginning on the second night of Passover, we say the brachah and count the days and weeks of the omer. (See below, or a prayerbook, for the full ritual.) Each of these weeks is associated with one of the divine/human attributes (humans are, after all, created in the divine image) known as “sefirot.” You can take some time each week to remind yourself to look for the divine in your life within the theme of that sefirah or check in with yourself how well you are reflecting the divine within that theme. The kabbalist belief is that working through the seven stages creates a channel for the divine to flood into our lives, culminating in the Revelation at Sinai, which we receive each year on Shavuot morning.

**May the divine flow into each of your lives!**

**Week 1**
**Hesed חסד**
Caring/Love/Grace
Be generous with your self and your possessions. Give without thought of reward. Give others the benefit of the doubt.

**Week 2**
**G’vurah גבורה**
Firmness/Fortitude
Necessary to hold life, to give it the shape it needs, but also sometimes painful, dangerous. Death and evil are usually seen as stemming from G’vurah. Self-discipline. Doing and expecting justice in the world. Sometimes righteous anger is necessary. Also equanimity, understanding the Godly necessity of Din.

**Week 3**
**Tiferet תפארת**
Splendor/Beautiful Balance
The balance of Mercy and Judgement without which the world could not endure. Synthesis. Seek balance. The middle path.
Also: hiddur mitzvah – doing every mitzvah (even every deed) as well and beautifully as you can.

**Week 4**
**Netsah נצח**
Victory/Eternity/Endurance
Also associated with Moses and prophecy. Honor that which is of enduring value, so that you may endure. Listen for God’s word.

**Week 5**
**Hod Hod**
Majesty
Also associated with Aaron and Worship
Cultivate your sense of awe. Give God your words.

**Week 6**
**Y’sod / B’rit יסוד / ברית**
Foundation / Covenant
Also called “Tsadik – Righteous One”.
Associated with (pro)creativity. The channel of blessing into the world. The Pillar upon which the world stands.
Know the power of good deeds and righteousness to make blessings flow.
Try to be a conduit for blessing.
Be firm.
Be creative.
HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FEBRUARY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

* The Board discussed the state of membership at the Temple--approximately 92 families--and considered how to address lapsed memberships and dues.

* A Governance Committee was formed to focus for the present on nominations for open Board positions and leadership development. It will eventually review bylaws and the rabbi's contracts.

* We discussed a letter to the congregation regarding development of the Temple’s Facebook page and using images of people who attend events at the Temple. The letter and a permission form are being mailed to members of the congregation.

* The Board approved contracting Stafford Electrical to install a mini split air conditioning system for three downstairs rooms: the administrative office, the rabbi's office, and the library.

* We approved hiring the Willimantic police as security for Friday of the Refugee Shabbat in March and for the April 15 community seder. Security for future events will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

* The Board discussed the possibility of hiring a visiting or part-time rabbi for official duties and to cover services during Rav Jeremy’s sabbatical (October 2020 to February 2021).

* We began considering a proposal to have a UConn Department of Social Work graduate student work with the Temple as a Community Organizing Intern.

---

The ritual of counting:

* barukh atah adonai eholenu melekh ba'olam asher kidsbanu b'mitsvat v'tsivantu al s'fira ha'omer.

You abound in blessing, CREATING, our God, majesty of the universe, that has consecrated us with its commandments and commanded us about the counting of the omer.

Today is the [number] day which is ___ week(s) (and ___ day(s)) of the omer.

Hayom ___ yamim shehem ___ shavuot (or: shavua ehad) (n/v ____ yamim) la’omer

(You might mention the “sfirah” of the week you’re in as well.)

[for example, the thirteenth day would be: Today is the thirteenth day, which is one week and six days of the omer – hayom shloshah asar yamim shehem shavua ehad v’shishah yamim la’omer]
As a follow up to the Phishing Scam and Social Media awareness information we published in the March edition of The Bulletin, we are providing you with additional information on gift card scams provided to us by Reconstructing Judaism. At the very least please do not donate money or honor a gift card request purporting to be from Rav Jeremy without checking with the office first.

Given the recent spate of email “phishing” scams targeting synagogues, often involving some kind of gift card angle and faked email addresses designed to look like the rabbi’s email address, we have provided here are some valuable articles and resources:

♦ Article from the Federal Trade Commission discussing these scams targeting various houses of worship: https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2019/07/worshipers-targeted-gift-card-scam. It includes several potentially useful links within it.

♦ Article, addressing phishing scams more generally and providing good advice about prevention and what to do if someone becomes a victim of them, is at https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/how-recognize-and-avoid-phishing-scams.

♦ The FTC encourages people to report these scams by notifying the FTC about them at ftc.gov/complaint. Your reports may help law enforcement agencies launch investigations that could stop imposters and other fraudsters in their tracks.

♦ If you get a phishing email, forward it to the Anti-Phishing Working Group at reportphishing@apwg.org. If you get a phishing text message, forward it to SPAM (7726).
APRIL JEWRY DUTY PARTICIPANTS AND NEEDS

We will be “gathering virtually/remotely” through April 11th. We will update you by the week of April 13th as to whether or not we will resume in-person gatherings. We’re trying hard to be optimistic!

Friday, April 17th, Tikkun Olam VaNefesh Service, 7:30 p.m.
- Hillary Stern
- Marc Kornisch
- Hedy Rudne

Saturday, April 18th Shabbat Service, 10:00 a.m.
- Rita Pollack
- Martha Cutter

3 other participants needed

Friday, April 24th, Shabbes Dinner at a member's home, 6:30 p.m.
- Call or email the office for location.

Saturday, April 25th, Shabbat Service, and Jewish Explorations 10:00 a.m.
- Gerry Berkowitz
- Scott DeShong
- Macie Tozzoli

1 other participant needed

We greatly appreciate everyone chipping in to take home our used tablecloths and returning them to the Temple clean and ready our next event! Just a friendly reminder that when you do return them to the cabinet kindly put the rectangular tablecloths in the designated area and the round tablecloths in their appropriate place. Thanks so much!
Sunday, April 19th, 7:00 p.m.: Yom Hashoah observance and service at the Temple.

Sunday, April 26th, 4:00 p.m.: Faith-based Community organizing - aka “speed dating” - getting to know your fellow congregants in a new and fun way while discussion issues of the day! What are your issues? What concerns you about the synagogue community? We will be exploring, in a fun and engaging way, what keeps us up at night. Really!

NOTE: JFEC events for the month of April have been cancelled or postponed; please check their website at jfec.com for updates.

May Save The Dates - We’re Going For Optimism Here Too!

Sunday, May 3rd, 3:00 p.m.: BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND, our Mezuzah making workshop. You’ll create a glass Mezuzah and decorate it by fusing decorative glass items onto it. Class with be taught by Temple member and glass crafter Ellen Marshall.

Sunday, May 3rd, 7:00 p.m.: Scriptural Sharing at UCONN’s Islamic Center, honoring the fasting traditions of the three Abrahamic faiths, followed by Iftar (Break-the-Fast) during Ramadan.

Friday, May 29th, 8:00 p.m.: Tikkun Leil Shavuot - a late-night extravaganza of Jewish learning, culture, and fun. More details to be revealed soon.

WOW! Temple Bnai Israel is an amazingly active!}

Well, we were until COVID-19 came along! This too shall pass, and we will together again!
heritage contributes specifically to our understanding of how to accomplish tikkun olam. It’s certainly rooted in the religious tradition, as well as in our people’s experience, but one doesn’t have to be a believer to benefit.

And we’re not just learning. We’re acting. People are also members of the Temple to support the important work that we do in the world. Based in our heritage, but in coalition with others, we’re leaders in the local fight to restore a compassionate, sensible refugee policy. We’re the ones who organize coalition meetings with our senators and representatives. We will reschedule our Refugee Shabbat concert and lecture for the benefit of the whole community. We play a leading role in promoting healthy interfaith relationships. We work with environmental groups and with anti-racism groups. We’re beginning to consider an effort to lead the wider community in Community Organizing, to strengthen all of our ability to make positive change. All in all, the Temple is an important part of the local tikkun olam ecosystem. All because we’re an organized community with the people and resources and motivation to do the work. It’s based in our heritage, but doesn’t require belief in God.

Finally, people belong simply to be part of the community. American life can be so alienated from others and many find joy and comfort in the connections of our community.

Our Caring Committee offers caring and aid to people suffering an illness or loss.

Our Shabbat gatherings and cultural and intellectual events offer social connection and opportunities for personal growth.

It’s been suggested that we might offer programming specifically on the topic of atheist/agnostic/secular Judaism. There’s a quite strong “tradition,” more than a hundred years old now, of non-deistic Jewish civilization and I think it would be interesting to have some programming about it.

In the meantime, I hope all of you who consider yourselves atheists or agnostics will continue to participate in our Temple’s community-building, culture-learning, world-repairing activities.
# APRIL YAHRZEITS

Kaddish will be said for the following Yahrzeits on April 3rd and April 4th

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Berkman</td>
<td>Grandfather of Ellie Shane</td>
<td>10 Nisan</td>
<td>April 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Douglass Glassman</td>
<td>Brother of Leanne Rand</td>
<td>11 Nisan</td>
<td>April 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva Glasner</td>
<td></td>
<td>11 Nisan</td>
<td>April 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evelyn Hazlehurst</td>
<td>Mother of Sharon Brettschneider</td>
<td>11 Nisan</td>
<td>April 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph Halperin</td>
<td>Father of Randee Berliner</td>
<td>11 Nisan</td>
<td>April 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Robertson</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 Nisan</td>
<td>April 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Levine</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 Nisan</td>
<td>April 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pearl Diane Newman</td>
<td>Mother of Carol Kraus</td>
<td>12 Nisan</td>
<td>April 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Fishman Schreiber</td>
<td>Aunt of Bernie Schreiber</td>
<td>13 Nisan</td>
<td>April 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivkah Ebram</td>
<td>Aunt of Bernie Schreiber</td>
<td>15 Nisan</td>
<td>April 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irwin I. Krug</td>
<td>Great Uncle of Jeanne Morascini</td>
<td>16 Nisan</td>
<td>April 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kaddish will be said for the following Yahrzeits on April 10th and April 11th

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mollie Krug</td>
<td>Great Aunt of Jeanne Morascini</td>
<td>17 Nisan</td>
<td>April 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nettie Rosen</td>
<td>Grandmother of Debra Sarazin</td>
<td>17 Nisan</td>
<td>April 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Gordon</td>
<td></td>
<td>18 Nisan</td>
<td>April 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Feigelstock</td>
<td></td>
<td>20 Nissan</td>
<td>April 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nancy Klein</td>
<td>Cousin of Merle Potchinsky</td>
<td>20 Nissan</td>
<td>April 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isaac Hochberg</td>
<td>Grandfather of Jeanne Morascini</td>
<td>21 Nissan</td>
<td>April 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell Rosenstein</td>
<td></td>
<td>23 Nisan</td>
<td>April 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazel Adams DeLuca</td>
<td>Mother of Grace Adams</td>
<td>23 Nisan</td>
<td>April 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Kaddish will be said for the following Yahrzeits on April 17th and April 18th

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ida Lessner</td>
<td>Mother of Moshe Lessner</td>
<td>24 Nisan</td>
<td>April 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hyman Pollack</td>
<td>Father-in-Law of Rita Pollack</td>
<td>26 Nisan</td>
<td>April 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milton Braslow</td>
<td>Step-father of Merle Potchinsky</td>
<td>26 Nisan</td>
<td>April 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Rubin</td>
<td>Father of Georgia Mittelman</td>
<td>27 Nisan</td>
<td>April 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frances Miller</td>
<td>Grandmother of Debra Sarazin</td>
<td>28 Nisan</td>
<td>April 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ida Fannie Weinstein</td>
<td>Grandmother of Carol Colombo</td>
<td>29 Nisan</td>
<td>April 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaron Stein</td>
<td>Father of Steve Stein</td>
<td>29 Nisan</td>
<td>April 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annie H. Sandler</td>
<td>Aunt of Jeanne Morascini</td>
<td>30 Nisan</td>
<td>April 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rose Winter Sherman</td>
<td>Great-aunt of Debra Sarazin</td>
<td>30 Nisan</td>
<td>April 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kaddish will be said for the following Yahrzeits on April 24th and April 25th

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham Krug</td>
<td>Great Uncle of Jeanne Morascini</td>
<td>2 Iyar</td>
<td>April 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhea Kronisch</td>
<td>Mother of Marc Kronisch</td>
<td>3 Iyar</td>
<td>April 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sarah Russian</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 Iyar</td>
<td>April 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathaniel Weinshel</td>
<td>Father of Marla Hauslaib</td>
<td>3 Iyar</td>
<td>April 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ya'akov Dardick</td>
<td>Brother of Ken Dardick</td>
<td>3 Iyar</td>
<td>April 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lidia Nepor</td>
<td>Mother of Nina Rosen</td>
<td>3 Iyar</td>
<td>April 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Kenneth Blumenstein</td>
<td>Father of Glenn Blumenstein</td>
<td>3 Iyar</td>
<td>April 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur Berkowitz</td>
<td>Father of Gerry Berkowitz</td>
<td>5 Iyar</td>
<td>April 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joyce Vinson</td>
<td>Aunt of Hillary Stern</td>
<td>6 Iyar</td>
<td>April 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennie Israel Horwitz</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 Iyar</td>
<td>May 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirley Bader</td>
<td>Mother of Jane Moskowitz</td>
<td>7 Iyar</td>
<td>May 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

May their memories be a source of strength and a blessing.
On Purim, we heard one crazy story...

...boo-ed the bad guy...

...and wondered “Y-M-I-Here?”
## Bulletin Submission Deadline

6:30pm

**Shabbat Dinner at a member’s home.**

### April 2020 7 Nisan 5780 - 6 Iyar 5780

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>11 Nisan</td>
<td>12 Nisan</td>
<td>13 Nisan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>14 Nisan</td>
<td>15 Nisan</td>
<td>16 Nisan</td>
<td>3 6:57</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>17 Nisan</td>
<td>18 Nisan</td>
<td>19 Nisan</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>20 Nisan</td>
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<td>22 Nisan</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>23 Nisan</td>
<td>24 Nisan</td>
<td>25 Nisan</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>26 Nisan</td>
<td>27 Nisan</td>
<td>28 Nisan</td>
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<td>7:00pm</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>29 Nisan</td>
<td>30 Nisan</td>
<td>1 Iyar</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
<td>7:00pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** This is the originally planned calendar. Please see page 5, “Being “Together” for Our Services With the Help of Technology,” regarding coronavirus cancellations and replacement ZOOM virtual gatherings. It’s easy to use, but here are two useful beginner guides:


It’s easy to use, but here are two useful beginner guides:

1. How to Participate in a Zoom Meeting: Using the “Attendee Controls”:

2. [https://bit.ly/3bsaOjz](https://bit.ly/3bsaOjz) (though on most computers, you won’t need an external microphone or headset.)

2. [https://bit.ly/3bsaOjz](https://bit.ly/3bsaOjz) (though on most computers, you won’t need an external microphone or headset.)

### Passover

- 4: Passover - Third Intermediate Day
  - 9:30am Tikkun Olam Comm Mtg

- 5: Passover - Fourth Intermediate Day
  - Look for an email update this week regarding resuming in-person gatherings or remaining “virtual” a bit longer.

- 6: Passover - Fifth Intermediate Day
  - 10:00am Passover Service

### Jewish Explorations Shabbat Experience

- 7:00pm Yom HaAtzmaut

- 7:00pm Jewish Principles for “Repairing the World - Tikkun Olam” class.

### Rosh Chodesh Iyar

- 8:00pm Interfaith Working Group.
- 7:00pm Board Meeting.

### Jewish Explorations Shabbat Experience

- 6:30pm Shabbos Dinner at a member’s home.
- 7:00pm Board Meeting.
- 6:30pm Shabbos Dinner at a member’s home.
- 7:00pm Board Meeting.

### May

- Hello May
Dear Friends, people do not send checks to our P.O. Box for the next month. If you would like to make a donation, or a payment on your account, please visit our website, templebnaiisrael.org. Click on the SUPPORT tab in the upper right corner of the page and choose DONATE from the drop down list. Your payment will be processed via our encrypted PayPal account; you do not need to have a PayPal account to use this feature.

While we will not be checking our P.O. Box mail regularly, we will be checking email and phone messages.

AN IMPORTANT UPDATE ABOUT SNAIL-MAIL AND DONATIONS TO THE TEMPLE.

We are going to remain hopeful that we will be able to hold this event. Check your email for an update as the time draws near.

Save the Date
Sunday, April 26th at 3:00 p.m.

First there was J-Date, then MeetYenta, and now there is Temple Bnai Israel’s Speed “Dating” for Good
(We’re not really dating, just getting to know each other in the Congregation!)

Be a part of this unique experience as we discover what really matters to us as a congregation!

Sponsored by the Tikkun Olam Committee

Please see the Tikkun Olam article on page 8 for further information about what this event means for our community.